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# ACTION IN EDUCATION

et al.: Fall 2019

A publication for College of Education alumni

DEPAUL  
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION



Golden Apple winner Carla Stone (MEd '97) is scoring points for STEM learning. See page 11.

Fall 2019

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# PROGRESS THROUGH PASSION

As I begin my third term as dean of the College of Education (COE), I have been asked to reflect on the past 10 years of my service at DePaul University. There were many reasons I was drawn to DePaul—its students, programs and service to Chicago—but most crucial was its mission and the remarkable faculty and staff with whom I met during my interview process. I immediately sensed an urgency and desire among members of the college to actualize the university's mission in the essence of the college: effective teaching, meaningful service and scholarly contributions to our disciplines. Reflecting the efforts of our college family, I will focus this year's Dean's Corner columns on how many of the college's activities and initiatives have helped propel us to where we are today.

When the college (and the university at large) experienced a significant enrollment drop in 2012, we added a number of programs to our portfolio, including a now successful undergraduate major in special education, conducted a reformation of our EdD program and added a PhD program. These efforts resulted in significant growth and an increased market share of our enrollment in nearly every subsequent year. We also implemented predictive analytics in enrollment projections, which proved highly accurate, allowing us to better plan for our future. Thanks to these efforts, our graduate enrollment has remained steady in a very difficult marketplace.

We consistently have encouraged and supported new program development, and I am convinced our programs, including our nationally recognized and newly CACREP-accredited counseling program, will continue to grow. In addition, our innovative, online Global Catholic Leadership EdD program; our impending online International Baccalaureate doctoral program; and the latest revisions to our doctoral programs are certain to attract a dedicated and impressive pool of new students.

Our growth was aided by an activist Dean's Advisory Council comprising both alumni and Chicago community members who are committed to working with COE faculty in improving the lives of those who need it the most. Our COE faculty members regularly step up and commit their time and/or resources to initiatives they present to the board.

For example, Advisory Council member Elizabeth Blinderman and her husband, David, organize an annual fundraiser that benefits our InSTEM program, which supports STEM education and training for young girls in the Chicago Public Schools system. Other projects supported include our DePaul University and Facing History and Ourselves Collaboration, the Stockyard Institute, the Academic Success Center, the Education and Counseling Center and the new Lift as You Climb initiative.

I am thrilled to enter my third term as dean of this innovative college and look forward to all of the incredible work, collaboration and successes to come.

Dean Paul Zions

## ACTION IN EDUCATION

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# IN BRIEF



## Celebrating Teachers

Founded in 2012, COE's Celebrating Teachers initiative recognizes exceptional K-12 teachers who made a significant impact on the lives of DePaul students in their formative years before entering higher education. Each year, DePaul juniors and seniors across the university are invited to nominate teachers by sharing their stories with a committee of COE faculty and staff involved in selecting their honorees.

The 2018–19 honorees celebrated at COE's most recent honors convocation include Nicole Small, Horace Greeley Elementary School, Chicago; Maggie Off, Peoria Notre Dame High School, Peoria, Ill.; Joseph Koshollek, Mukwonago High School, Mukwonago, Wis.; Ping Wu, Columbus School for Girls, Columbus, Ohio; Bonnie Carpenter, Idyllwild Arts, Idyllwild, Calif.; Stephanie Payne, Stuttgart High School, Stuttgart, Germany; Sandy Schultz, Bethlehem Lutheran School, River Grove, Ill.; and Allison Kennedy, Lang Ranch Elementary School, Thousand Oaks, Calif. Working in different disciplines at schools nationwide, these teachers share the common trait of inspiring students beyond curricular specifics.

"I felt humbled and inspired after attending the Celebrating Teachers award and honors convocation program that evening," says Ping Wu (above with Dean Paul Zions), a Mandarin Chinese language teacher whose nominating former student, Michaela Milligan, is now pursuing a degree in Chinese studies and anthropology at DePaul. "Hearing stories of other amazing teachers has motivated me to work even harder in the future. It was a generous act from DePaul for which I am grateful, and I got to meet up with my former student, Michaela!"

## Mayoral Mentors

This past spring, Sonia Soltero, professor and chair of the College of Education's Department of Leadership, Language and Curriculum, served on the education transition committee for Lori Lightfoot, following Lightfoot's history-making election as Chicago's 56th mayor.

The education team, in its report to the mayor, made recommendations to "advance inclusive voice, fair funding, and diverse talent, with the belief that long-standing enrollment, discipline, and funding practices perpetuate historic inequities. Rooted unapologetically in a shared commitment to equity, we also include policy, program, and strategy recommendations for those working to meet the learning needs of all Chicagoans."

Equity also prevailed in Lightfoot's interactions with co-chairs of the 10 transition committees.

"She had thoughtful questions that clearly weren't scripted responses to each report about how these 10 areas, from education to transportation to housing, interfaced so they're not these siloed things," says Soltero.

It wasn't a one-and-done opportunity.

"The plan is to keep in touch with people who served," adds Soltero, who believes educators will have significant, ongoing input with the mayor's office. That seems evident considering one team member, Sybil Madison-Boyd, who has directed citywide youth education programs, was named Chicago's first-ever deputy mayor of education and human services.



## Securing School Data

As schools grow more dependent on online technology, they've also become more vulnerable to cybersecurity incidents. COE's Center for Educational Technology addressed this issue last spring in a panel discussion, "The edTech Privacy Problem." Held at COE and streamed live online, the discussion focused on safeguarding student and teacher privacy and data. The panel's experts sharing insights and answering questions included Amelia Vance, policy counsel and director of the Education Privacy Project at the Future of Privacy Forum, a national, nonprofit policy alliance; Arlene Yetnikoff, director of information security at DePaul; and Steve Garton, senior manager at Common Sense, a national nonprofit that recommends technology solutions for families and schools.



# GLOBAL-MINDED IMPACT

## COE's International Baccalaureate Educator Certificate expands a commitment to preparing multicultural, urban educators

In 1948, Marie-Thérèse Maurette, director of the International School of Geneva, wrote "Educational Techniques for Peace: Do They Exist?," a document for a meeting in Paris at the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which had been established two years earlier. Her treatise provided the framework for the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme when the IB organization was founded in Geneva in 1968.

The IB is a nonprofit, educational foundation whose original purpose was to facilitate the international mobility of students preparing for university by providing schools with a curriculum and diploma recognized by universities around the world. The program, intended for the children of diplomats and multinational organizations, was inspired by the ideals of global peace, community service and self-empowering inquiry.

The IB has since expanded its mission and now strives to make an IB education available to students of all ages. The goal is to create responsible, socially conscious adults who use their cross-cultural education to promote world peace. Today, more than 1 million students, ages 3 to 19, navigate the IB's challenging curricula in nearly 5,000 schools across more than 150 countries.

Guided by aligned missions, DePaul has long supported IB educators throughout the Chicago area. In 2013, COE responded to the local expansion of IB schools with the launch of its IB educator certificate (IBEC) in teaching and learning, titled "Teaching and Learning in a Global Context." Few universities offer an IBEC program, putting DePaul in a select group.

Created and administered by COE's Office of Innovative Professional Learning (OIPL), the IBEC is offered on campus to students in

middle-grades and secondary teacher-preparation programs. The program is also provided online, certifying pre- and in-service teachers worldwide to teach the IB's Middle Years Programme and Diploma Programme. Participants learn how to develop and write curricula, create assessment and teaching strategies, and collaborate and consult with IB educators and peers globally.

"The foundations and framework of the IB program, including social-emotional learning integration, inquiry-based learning and authentic assessment, align with the teacher-preparation programs in the College of Education," says OIPL Director Donna Kiel.

IB student projects that emphasize inclusion, creativity and collaboration to address real-world community needs, from renewable energy to homelessness, also mesh perfectly with DePaul's service-oriented mission, adds Kiel. "Not only are our missions aligned, but so is our goal to inspire future teachers who are committed to global education."

The IB certification is a marketable asset for DePaul students, as it is for busy educators elsewhere, who are attracted to the online option's rolling admissions and self-paced, asynchronous sessions. Participants also earn a DePaul IBEC microcredential, including an electronic badge that offers evidence of competency within the IB framework of skills.

DePaul's Center for Access and Attainment (CAA) planted the program's seeds years earlier. Its support of IB at Chicago Public Schools (CPS) included research studies showing sustained achievement in college for CPS graduates from disadvantaged neighborhoods where IB had been introduced. CAA used a grant from the McGowan Charitable Fund to increase awareness of IB among CPS elementary schools, bolster CPS's IB summer college



### Empowering Teachers Worldwide

Left: DePaul IBEC participant Charan Harris with IB students in his music class in Hyderabad, India. Below: IBEC participant Learnmore Mukando (far right) with students and faculty at Millerite International School in Harare, Zimbabwe.

**I am now pursuing a career path I hope will lead me to an IB World School with an established curriculum."**



academy that DePaul hosts annually and assess math skills of former CPS IB students at DePaul.

In 2013, CAA reached out to Kiel and other COE colleagues to attend CPS IB coordinators' meetings hosted at DePaul and form a task force to explore further support. Kiel spent time observing classes in IB schools and gathered from teachers that professional development was a need COE could fill. She also connected with IB's global leadership on its rigorous university-partner accreditation process, which included a four-day campus visit to DePaul by an IB assessment team.

"There isn't a road map for it," says Kiel. "You have to really develop the program first, and IB is highly selective about putting their name on any teacher training programs."

Kiel brought in local IB experts as adjuncts to help align the IBEC program with IB's standards. Elizabeth Stock, a former IB coordinator for CPS, worked with Kiel and a task force, convened by Kiel, which included other IB educators who shared ideas and practices and helped shape the program's curriculum. They include Tim Gronholm, an IB coordinator and national workshop leader who teaches at Morgan Park High School, an IB school on Chicago's South Side. More adjuncts have since joined the team. The program, designed and taught by COE faculty and IB educators, has evolved into a dynamic partnership.

"This isn't just a feather in the university's cap or a mission statement on a wall," says Gronholm. "It's an actual part of their day-to-day reality and the reason I jumped on board."

Referring to IB as "advanced placement on steroids," Gronholm says IB's focus on educating kids as empathetic global citizens spoke

to him. He also credits former Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel for the push to make CPS the largest IB school district in the nation.

The growing number of local IB schools, including 34 elementary feeder schools and 56 high schools, makes DePaul's teacher training even more vital. Yet the program's steady growth so far, says Stock, has been among online participants abroad—from 44 countries at last count. The timing seems serendipitous.

"We have a huge opportunity as educators to teach students how to respond to world events through character traits that IB emphasizes, things like principled, knowledgeable, inquiring, reflective," says Stock. "We want to teach students how to be critical thinkers and ask questions, but also how to be accepting of people who are different. The IB program taps into that: how can we all contribute toward the same goals all communities need?"

One recent DePaul IBEC participant hoping to make such a contribution is Learnmore Mukando (pictured above, far right), an aptly named chaplain, counselor and teacher at a small private school in Harare, Zimbabwe. Mukando's enrollment was motivated by DePaul's service-oriented mission and the personalized admission process with Kiel and Brennan Palmer, OIPL's assistant director.

"Dr. Kiel worked with me to provide this amazing opportunity to learn IB when others would not," says Mukando, who appreciated the program's robust content and smartphone accessibility. "I live in a country where the ordinary man on the street doesn't know IB exists, but I am now pursuing a career path I hope will lead me to an IB World School with an established curriculum."



# SAGE ADVICE

THE EDUCATION  
ISSUES FORUM  
SERIES APPROACHES  
A DECADE'S WORTH  
OF POWERFUL  
CONVERSATIONS  
WITH ENLIGHTENING  
EDUCATORS,  
RESEARCHERS AND  
ACTIVISTS



The rapt audience, packed into Room 314AB of the DePaul Student Center one chilly evening last February, heard the physician's caution.

"This is not only about traumatized students. It's about all of us and turning the lens 365 degrees," said Dr. Audrey Stillerman, a University of Illinois College of Medicine professor, family physician and community engagement specialist. One of three panelists, she had come to share frontline insights into how adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), ranging from hunger to abuse to systemic discrimination, affect learning for primary and secondary school students. Her co-panelists, Lauren Williams, a Chicago Public Schools counselor serving underprivileged South and West Side communities, and Kristine Argue-Mason, an Illinois Education Association professional development director, joined the discussion into how ACEs trigger a cascade of trauma that consumes not just the individual, but also caregivers, teachers and counselors.

"We'll be discussing disturbing topics," Stillerman continued. "We do this to honor the experiences of so many of us, identify root causes, and go forth to co-create healing spaces. If any of this gets too uncomfortable, feel free to leave or take a break." Ninety minutes later, nobody had budged. Those listening had just absorbed three expert perspectives on systemic change in institutions, the neurobiological effects of trauma, the necessity of self-care, and pragmatic strategies from soothing, rhythmic classroom activities to coalition building with parents.

That knowledge came at no cost to audience members. COE's Education Issues Forum series—31 forums and counting—is free and open to all students, faculty and the public.

Diane Horwitz, a longtime educator and former COE adjunct professor, initiated the series in 2010 and coordinates its programming. Its purpose, she says, is to engage students in the discussion of current, major issues impacting educators and introduce different viewpoints from local and national policy advocates and experts.

“THESE FORUMS HELP START THEM THINKING ABOUT WORKING TOGETHER AND BRINGING THEIR STRENGTHS TO AN ISSUE THAT MAY SEEM OVERWHELMING. WHEN EVERYONE IS WORKING ON THE SAME PAGE, WITH THE SAME KNOWLEDGE, CHALLENGES CAN BE ADDRESSED IN A HOLISTIC WAY.”

"It's primarily for COE students," says Horwitz, "but, depending on the topic, we also get students from other departments—social science, social work, psychology—as well as practicing educators and people just interested in the general landscape of educational issues. It's not a research conference or purely academic, although we often have guests who have done research within a particular issue to set a context."

Topics have included teacher evaluation, high-stakes testing, restorative justice, segregation, the local and national surge in Latino immigrant students, trauma-informed teaching and counseling, youth leadership in the wake of mass shootings, and the challenge of teaching in a racially and politically polarized time.

The guest speakers Horwitz has persuaded to participate include former Chicago Teachers Union President Karen Lewis, national school funding expert Ralph Martire, former U.S. Department of Labor chief economist Jesse Rothstein, and civil rights activist and math educator Bob Moses. But unsung heroes who toil in unique professional niches, such as DePaul alumna Tara Gill, a clinical psychologist at Lurie Children's Hospital's Center for Childhood Resilience, also contribute important perspectives.

"We hope it starts a conversation that continues in their classrooms and beyond when they become teachers or counselors," says Horwitz.

Horwitz often plans forums in collaboration with COE faculty, who, in turn, integrate the forums into related curricula and bring classes to the discussions. For example, Horwitz worked closely with Melissa Ockerman, associate professor of counseling, to plan last winter's ACEs-themed forum.

"COE faculty have rigorous programs, but there's no way we can get to everything," says Ockerman. "This supplements the work we're doing in meaningful, important ways and helps students explore topics in even more depth."

Another benefit, adds Ockerman, is showing students how challenges can be met through an interdisciplinary approach.

"We'll have a counselor, teacher and principal talking about an issue, because those individuals need to interact in school buildings to tackle large issues such as trauma," says Ockerman. "We believe that if our pre-service counselors, teachers and

principals are doing the same at this level they're more likely to continue that when they're in service. These forums help start them thinking about working together and bringing their strengths to an issue that may seem overwhelming. When everyone is working on the same page, with the same knowledge, challenges can be addressed in a holistic way."

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### **"WE HOPE IT STARTS A CONVERSATION THAT CONTINUES IN THEIR CLASSROOMS AND BEYOND WHEN THEY BECOME TEACHERS OR COUNSELORS."**

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Another faculty collaborator who seconds that notion is Horace Hall, associate professor of human development.

"I applaud Diane and my colleagues for providing these sorts of beyond-the-book experiences for future teachers, so that when they get into schools it's not a culture shock," says Hall. "More broadly, it's important for everyone to know these things, because schools are microcosms of society. The two are inextricably linked."

Hall cites a winter 2018 forum panel on sanctuary schools moderated by bilingual education expert Sonia Soltero, chair of

COE's Department of Leadership, Language and Curriculum, as particularly relevant when unpredictable immigration policy is increasing uncertainty and fear among students, families and educators in many school communities.

The school-society link was also front and center at last spring's offering, a conversation with education sociologist and author Eve Ewing that played to a full house. Interviewed by Hall, Ewing, an assistant professor at the University of Chicago's School of Social Service Administration, talked about her lauded book, "Ghosts in the Schoolyard: Racism and School Closings on Chicago's South Side," in which she explores the relationship between public school closings, racial history and cultural erasure in the Bronzeville community.

"We discussed how institutional mourning is similar to the loss of a loved one," says Hall. "What comes with the institution are your rights, how you're perceived as a citizen. It's where you receive services, apply for a job, use a computer, get fed. When that's taken away, you feel less than, and it's unfair. Most of our audience that night probably hadn't experienced that, and they had questions about whether it was a conspiracy—which Eve shot down—and how to navigate it when it happens again, because it will. It was arousing information for a younger generation."

*For details about upcoming Education Issues Forum events, visit [education.depaul.edu](http://education.depaul.edu).*



Opposite and above: Guest speakers discuss ACEs and poverty's impact on children's mental health.



# lessons learned

We asked six COE faculty who recently moved on from DePaul to share some words of wisdom inspired by their experiences at the university



**Enora Brown**

*Professor Emerita, Teacher Education, Doctoral Program*

"My area of interest is human development within education policy and research. I approach that from an interdisciplinary perspective that spans psychology, history, sociology and economics. Context, culture and power relations are important to consider for children and youth as well as adults and educators.

"On a macro level, I've examined youth identity in schools globally and how reform and policy changes, such as privatization and standardization, impact how and whether students learn and are being taught. Something as simple as middle-school students competing to get into school creates new pressures and anxiety that has really changed the landscape.

"People are beginning to resist some of the changes and think about what's best for youth and learning so that all kids, no matter where they're from, have a shot at a good education and future. DePaul's ethos of intention and Vincentian personalism, its support for first-generation students, is impressive, important and sets the tone for classroom conversations, papers and dissertations."



**Jim Wolfinger**

*Dean, College of Education, Illinois State University, Former Associate Dean, College of Education*

"I was at DePaul for 16 years. I had a joint appointment in the history department and the College of Education, where I was associate dean of curriculum and programs for seven years. Although I'm on another path now, I left with nothing but good feelings about the friendships I made, DePaul's support of me as a teacher and scholar, and the future of the university's urban, multicultural, social justice-informed mission.

"I've written two books about Philadelphia's urban history, and I'm working on a third about the city's black politics. Research makes me think in new ways about the classes that I teach. It reminds me why I became a historian in the first place. You have questions, look at new sources, weigh those sources, find new tools for examining knowledge that isn't static. In my Readings in American History class at DePaul, I'd sometimes have friends from other universities come in to teach their books. It's a balance for graduate students, who are adept at critiquing a book mercilessly, to hear a different point of view or see two historians argue with each other. It's all part of the academic enterprise."



**Beverly Trezek**

*Morgridge Chair in Reading, University of Wisconsin-Madison  
Former Professor, Special Education*

"I came to DePaul in 2005 and was very involved with the reading specialist program. It's a program for practicing teachers earning a master's to be reading specialists in schools. They do practical experiences in COE's Education and Counseling Center. Struggling literacy learners are brought from the community to campus, and students provide reading instruction under the supervision of professors.

"The majority of my teaching experience is in deaf education. Deaf students have some of the greatest literacy challenges, because the English language is alphabetic and based on sound. My research uses visual gestural systems and a language communication system known as Cued Speech to teach deaf children about the language's sound system.

"I also taught deaf students for many years in Madison, and I left DePaul to take an endowed chair position in reading at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. The university is attached to a medical school and hospital where they do pediatric cochlear implants, which offers opportunities for some research aspirations of mine."



**Karen Monkman**  
*Professor Emerita, Teacher Education,  
Doctoral Program*

"I taught English as a second language at several universities and community colleges, then worked for 15 years at DePaul, mainly in curriculum studies. We define that broadly. It's about critically examining what and how we're teaching, wherever we're teaching. It's not just about schooling but any place where people learn things. I'm interested in how people learn about culture, whether they're acquiring a second culture or trying to understand people from another culture. Gender policy at the global level is also a major part of my research agenda.

"I've been pushing our interdisciplinary field—comparative and international education—to acknowledge migration is very international and conditioned by global forces. It tends to be framed as people from one country going to another country, and the host country tends to totally ignore their history. If you want to teach kids in schools, wherever they are, and if they come from other places, you have to understand their history.

"DePaul's Vincentian personalism and social justice agenda, the way I interpret it, resonates nicely with my values."



**Rev. Patrick McDewitt, C.M.**  
*Professor Emeritus, Counseling*

"I've been a Vincentian for 42 years and a priest for 33. I've been called to be rector of a seminary program in Nairobi, Kenya, to train Vincentian priests and brothers.

"I had the great pleasure of being a part of DePaul's counseling program since 1996, first as a doctoral student, then teaching as an adjunct before becoming a faculty member. I taught almost every course in that curriculum: psychopathology, testing and appraisal, and psychometrics, which became my forte. For the past several years, I specialized in assessment.

"It's been exciting to see the growth of that program and the profession. I experienced a lot of personal and professional growth as well, as did colleagues and students. For the introductory course I taught, I'd bring a panel of alumni who spoke to the newer students. That was a real testimony to me, and deeply moving, about how they have done great things.

"Education has to be mission-driven and about people in relationships, more than a business model. A systemic and significant difference can be made when people are in community, and communities are powerful entities for change. DePaul is built on that mission. It's not about me or you. It's about something greater than ourselves, and that has a spiritual core."



**Jeffrey Kuzmic**  
*Professor Emeritus, Curriculum Studies,  
Doctoral Program*

"During my 26 years at DePaul I found that my background in K-12 teaching helped me connect with students preparing to become teachers, to understand and remember the fear of walking into the classroom for the first time and the challenges of teaching in an educational environment that often doesn't value teachers.

"Part of it is helping people come to grips with the way race, gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation impact how we see the world and interact with others who are similar and different. Whether you're teaching math, science or history, the personal and professional are intimately linked. It's challenging to find the language, opportunity and space to deal with differences across voice, status and power.

"The diversity of DePaul creates opportunities and spaces that other institutions of higher education don't necessarily get. Its social justice focus is fused throughout the curriculum, although each of us defines that in different ways. We're serious about engaging in an intellectual environment where important ideas, skills and knowledge can be learned even while that's challenged by larger forces in our society that think education is just about a certificate or getting a job and making money."



# Where the Sidewalk Starts

A family turns its loss into a literary legacy benefiting COE students, teachers and the children they help



Anyone who considers libraries impersonal repositories hasn't checked out a book from the Katie Brown Memorial Library. The collection of diverse, top-tier children's literature, housed next to COE's Academic Success Center, is an eponymous teacher-education resource with its own story of triumph over tragedy.

On March 20, 2009, Katie Brown, then a pre-service teacher candidate at COE, passed away after a lifelong battle with cystic fibrosis. Vivacious and determined to the end, she'd hoped to put her passion for children's literacy to use at the elementary level.

Katie's late grandmother, Jean Brown, herself a former teacher, reached out to DePaul following her family's loss, wanting to make a donation in Katie's name. That grew into a larger conversation with Katie's parents, COE faculty and DePaul's Office of Advancement about a more lasting legacy the family's generosity could make possible.

The outcome—a library for faculty and students, who use the books on campus and in local schools for field-experience

training—embodies the entire Brown family's commitment to serving others. Dr. Calvin Brown, Jr., Katie's father, directed the rheumatology training program at Northwestern University's Feinberg School of Medicine. His wife, JoAnn Brown, is a clinical social worker and therapist who treats survivors of sexual abuse.

Their endowed gift also provides annual funds for book purchases. The library currently houses more than 1,000 titles in numerous genres, including recent award winners, as well as a large collection of bilingual books.

"The first set of books we ordered had the theme of characters overcoming obstacles," says Chair of Elementary Reading Roxanne Owens. "That was our first tribute to Katie, because she worked hard to overcome obstacles."

That indomitable spirit was evident when Katie went into schools for her fieldwork. COE faculty tried to find her first-floor classrooms, because stairs were challenging. "Even then," says Owens, "she'd say, 'No, I still want to go. Just not too many stairs, please.'"

Last year, Calvin and JoAnn Brown added another element to Katie's legacy. They pledged to fund the Brown Family Endowed Scholarship for Counseling. The scholarship will benefit a counseling student with financial needs who plans to work with at-risk children.

"Our counseling program is incredibly rigorous and requires three years of graduate work," says Melissa Ockerman, associate professor of counseling. "Scholarships to assist our dedicated students are deeply appreciated as they continue to give back to our community and promote our university values."

No doubt Katie would have appreciated this never-ending story and its growing cast of supportive characters looking out for children and their imaginations.

The first set of books we ordered had the theme of characters overcoming obstacles."

# hoops and dreams

Carla Stone (MEd '97), a former Academic All-American basketball player at DePaul University, has always seemed larger than life to her sixth grade math and science students at Evanston's Nichols Middle School. That was certainly true one spring day in 2011 when reps from the Golden Apple Foundation showed up at Stone's classroom to present her with their Excellence in Teaching award, given that year to 10 teachers chosen from more than 600 nominees.

But Stone was literally larger than life recently: After delivering the game ball prior to tipoff, she was profiled in a video broadcasted on the Jumbotron during halftime of a DePaul men's basketball game at Wintrust Arena at McCormick Square last February. The video was part of a game-night celebration of the College of Education and School of Continuing and Professional Studies. Stone enjoyed the view from a skybox while reconnecting with classmates and faculty.

It was a fulfilling moment. Stone, a Vancouver, Canada, native who's also played some semipro and professional hoops, arrived at DePaul in 1991 on an athletic scholarship. Wavering between a political science and a pre-med focus, she decided to pursue a teaching career after being inspired by an education elective class.

"The teacher had all these stories about helping kids with special needs and the importance of mainstreaming them into the general ed population," Stone recalls of that revelatory moment. "I wanted to help people, but I hadn't known in what capacity. I realized, 'Yeah, that's why I'm here, to be a teacher.'"

Stone has made the most of that decision over her two decades in Evanston-Skokie School District 65, where she's taught at a K-8 magnet school and Nichols. Both schools have diverse student bodies, which Stone says aligns with her personal background and the culture she found so appealing at DePaul.

Stone's pedagogy embraces creative exploration through play and hands-on, project-based learning via STEM-oriented engineering design methods. Through her STEM consulting practice, she also organizes citywide invention conventions that challenge kids to design solutions to environmental issues collaboratively. Sports-derived lessons come in handy.



**"You need to be emotionally intelligent, self-disciplined and work at your craft so you can be better for your team."**

"In basketball, as in life, you have to learn to work with others, and things don't always go your way," says Stone. "You need to be emotionally intelligent, self-disciplined and work at your craft so you can be better for your team."

That said, Stone bristles at antiquated notions of packing all learners together into monolithic cohorts.

"Everyone learns differently, at different times of the day, with different groups in different capacities," she says.

That includes some team members in her classes who find their path to learning blocked by anxiety and stress. Stone has helped such students by borrowing breathing and mindfulness techniques from her yoga and meditation practice. Ultimately, says Stone, all of her classroom methods are based on making students feel respected.

"They will shine," she says. "You see it every day. That light comes back on or it gets brighter. And that keeps me going, too."

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